

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

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FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8696

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, UY

SUBJ: REACTION TO PRESIDENT FORD'S FOREIGN POLICY ADDRESS
AND TO EVENTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

REFS: A) STATE 86289; B) MVD 1189

1. SUMMARY: THAT WHICH FOLLOWS IS A SPOT REPORT ON WHAT MIGHT BE TRANSITORY VIEWPOINTS BUT WHICH NEVERTHELESS REPRESENT AN IMMEDIATE, EMOTIONAL REACTION VISIBLE AMONG URUGUAYANS TO EVENTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA.

2. WHILE PRESIDENT FORD'S FOREIGN POLICY ADDRESS ITSELF HAS NOT BEEN COMMENTED ON TO ANY EXTENT IN URUGUAY, EVENTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA HAVE HAD AN IMPACT. PUBLICLY, THE GOU CASTIGATED THE ACTIONS OF THE COMMUNISTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA (REFTEL B). PRIVATELY, HOWEVER, THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT URUGUAYANS MAY WELL VIEW THE FALL OF CAMBODIA AND THE BLOW TO SOUTH VIET NAM NOT ONLY AS A MORAL AND POLITICAL DEFEAT FOR THE U.S. BUT ALSO AS ABANDONMENT OF ALLIES BY THE U.S., ESPECIALLY AS THEY SEE THEMSELVES ALSO AS A SMALL NATION STRUGGLING AGAINST COMMUNISM. THE VALUE OF U.S. COMMITMENTS TO SMALL, ANTI-COMMUNIST ALLIES, SUCH AS URUGUAY, IS THUS BROUGHT INTO QUESTION AS IS WONDER WHETHER DETENTE WILL NOT IN THE END SO FAVOR COMMUNIST INTERESTS AS ULTIMATELY TO LEAD TO REALIGNMENTS WHICH WILL LEAVE THEM ISOLATED.

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3. ALONG SIMILAR LINES, SOME HAVE QUESTIONED THE VALUE OF URUGUAY'S SUPPORT TO THE U.S. WHEN THEY READ THAT THE SECRETARY WILL VISIT ARGENTINA, WHICH HAS PLAYED A NON-ALIGNED, THIRD WORLD ROLE, AND NOT VISIT URUGUAY, A HELPFUL FRIEND ACROSS THE RIVER, AND THAT HE ALSO REPORTEDLY CONSIDERS A LATER VISIT TO PERU AS A MUST. IN THIS REGARD IT SHOULD BE REMEMBERED THAT BOTH PRESIDENT BORDABERRY AND FONMIN BLANCO HAVE ASKED US TO REPORT THEIR HOPE THAT THE SECRETARY WOULD VISIT HERE AND THAT THIS WOULD CONSTITUTE NOT ONLY ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THEM ON THEIR POLICY CONVICTIONS BUT PROOF TO THEIR CRITICS THAT THIS SUPPORT IS NOTED AND APPRECIATED. ALONG THESE SAME LINES OUR VERY GOOD FRIEND HERE, THE ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR, HAS EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SECRETARY'S STOPPING IN HERE AND HAS SAID AS WELL THAT SOME NEWS SOURCES TOLD HIM THAT OMISSION OF URUGUAY DEMONSTRATES INSUFFICIENT EFFORT BY THIS EMBASSY IN ADVOCATING RECOGNITION OF THIS COUNTRY. END SUMMARY

4. URUGUAYANS TEND TO HOLD PRESSURES FROM THE U.S. CONGRESS AND MEDIA AS RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT THEY CONSIDER TRAGIC MOVES, INCLUDING PRESSING THE EXECUTIVE TO RENEW RELATIONS WITH CUBA AND GIVING THE COMMUNISTS THE GO-AHEAD IN CAMBODIA AND SOUTH VIET NAM BY ASSURING THEM THAT NO ADDITIONAL U.S. ASSISTANCE WOULD GO TO OUR ALLIES.

5. THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE REACTION TO PRESIDENT FORD'S APRIL 10 ADDRESS IN URUGUAY. THE ONLY DIRECT PRESS COMMENT TO DATE WAS AN ITEM IN LA MANANA COLUMN OF APRIL 13 WHICH SIMPLY NOTED THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD REQUESTED AUTHORITY FROM CONGRESS NOT TO APPLY THE RESTRICTIONS IN THE TRADE ACT WHICH ARE INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE NATIONAL INTEREST.

6. WITH RESPECT TO HOST COUNTRY PERCEPTIONS OF THE U.S. AND U.S. POLICY IN LATIN AMERICA AS A RESULT OF EVENTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, THERE HAS BEEN SOME STRONG REACTION, ALTHOUGH ANY EVALUATION OF IT COULD ONLY BE TENTATIVE AND PRELIMINARY. AS THEIR COMMUNIQUE ON SEA SHOWED (REFTEL B) THEY HOLD THE COMMUNISTS TO BE AGGRESSORS IN VIOLATING THE PARIS PEACE ACCORDS. THEY ALSO LOOK AT THE TRAGEDY NOW UNFOLDING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA AS A CLEAR DEFEAT FOR THE U.S. POLICY AND ACTION THERE. THEY TEND TO PLACE THE BLAME ON THE U.S. CONGRESS FOR HAVING SIGNALLED THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COMMUNISTS WELL IN ADVANCE THAT THEY COULD ATTACK IN BOTH CAMBODIA AND VIET NAM WITH IMPUNITY BECAUSE THE U.S. WOULD NOT PROVIDE ADDITIONAL MILITARY ASSISTANCES TO ITS ALLIES.

7. THE GOU SEES ITSELF AS A SMALL, ANTI-COMMUNIST ALLY OF THE U.S. AND AS A RESULT OF RECENT EVENTS, MAY WELL BE ASKING ITSELF WHETHER THE U.S. WOULD ABANDON IT, TOO, IF COMMUNIST PRESSURES WERE TO INCREASE. PEOPLE HERE, AND THIS IS BY NO MEANS

LIMITED TO THE MORE OUTSPOKEN MILITARY SEGMENT OF SOCIETY, EXPRESS THEIR BELIEF THAT THE U.S. IS FAILING IN ITS ROLE AS A WORLD LEADER--LARGELY BECAUSE OF WHAT THEY SEE AS AN EXECUTIVE-LEGISLATIVE CONFRONTATION WHICH HAS TIED THE HANDS OF THE EXECUTIVE AND RESULTED IN EXTRAORDINARY INFLUENCE ON FOREIGN POLICY BY CONGRESSMEN AND SENATORS WHOSE ACTS THEY SEE AS HELPFUL, IN EFFECT, TO THE COMMUNISTS, WHATEVER THEIR INTENT AND CONVICTIONS MAY BE.

8. OBVIOUSLY, THE CONSERVATIVE URUGUAYANS (REACTING IN THE 1950'S STYLE TO THE NEAR DESTRUCTION OF THEIR SOCIETY FOR WHICH THEY BLAME THE COMMUNISTS)TEND TO FEAR DETENTE IS AN UNWISE ACCOMODATION TO COMMUNISM. GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WENT TO THE RECENT QUITO MFM AND PRESENTED WHAT THEY BELIEVED TO BE A DOCUMENTED (WITH NAMES, PLACES, DATES, ETC.) CASE PROVING CONTINUED CUBAN INTERVENTION IN INTERNAL URUGUAYAN AFFAIRS. THEY SAY NO ONE LISTENED AS PRINCIPLE YIELDED TO FORCED MOMENTUM FAVORING A POLITICAL OPENING TOWARDS CUBA, AN OPENING STIMULATED FOR A COMPLEX OF REASONS NOT ONLY BY NATIONS FEARING FOR THE FUTURE OF THE OAS BUT ALSO BY THE THIRD WORLD COURTING COUNTRIES LIKE PERU, PANAMA AND ARGENTINA, AND ADVOCATED AS WELL BY STRONG ELEMENTS OF THE AMERICAN CONGRESS AND MEDIA WHICH APPEARED TO BE FORCING THE EXECUTIVE INFO A LINE OF ACTION AGAINST ITS JUDGMENT AND WILL.

1. WITH RESPECT TO THE SECRETARY'S TRIP, THE ATTITUDES

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

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HERE TIE INTO THE WHO SUBJECT OF THIS CABLE. URUGUAYANS FEEL QUITE STRONGLY THAT THEY HAVE IDENTIFIED WITH U.S. FOREIGN POLICY AND HAVE PLAYED A POSTIVE ROLE. NEVER-THELESS, THEY ARGUE THE SQUEAKING WHEEL GETS THE GREASE. WHILE THEY DON'T CONTEST THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SECRETARY'S VISITING ARGENTINA, THEY VIEW THIS NATION, IN CONTRAST TO URUGUAY WHICH IS LEFT OUT, AS A NATION WHICH HAS JOINED THE NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCES AND WHICH HAS ATTEMPTED TO PLAY A IMPORTANT THIRD WORLD ROLE, OFTEN IN DIRECT CONFLICT WITH THE U.S. THEY ARE ASKING THEMSELVES, THEREFORE, WHETHER THERE IS ANY BENEFIT IN SUPPORTING THE U.S. JUST AS IMPORTANT, AND AS A RESULT OF EVENTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, THEY ARE GOING BEYOND THAT TO ASK THEMSELVES (AND US) WHETHER THE U.S. WOULD DO ANYTHING AT ALL TO HELP A SMALL ALLY IF IT WERE THREATENED BY WHAT PRESIDENT BORDABERRY REFERRED TO ON APRIL 11 AS "SUBVERSION AND INFLITRATION WITH FOREIGN HELP" (REFTEL B).

10 THE STRONG FEELINGS GENERATED HERE BY EVENTS OF SOUTHEAST ASIA HAVE BEEN REFLECTED IN EDITORIAL COMMENTS. THOSE WHICH FOLLOW REPRESENT, IN VARYING DEGREES, WHAT WE ARE HEARING AND HAVE HEARD FROM PEOPLE IN GOVERNMENT, IN THE MILITARY AND FROM ORDINARY PEOPLE AS WELL.

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11. IN AN APRIL 13 EDITORIAL ENTITLED "CUBA FOR VIETNAM?", THE NATIONALISTIC, PRO-MILITARY LA MANANA REVIEWED U.S. POLICY OF "WEAKNESS AND APPEASEMENT" SINCE WORLD WAR II, INCLUDING THE COMMENT THAT CHIANG KAI SHEK HAD TO HAND OVER CONTINENTAL CHINA BECAUSE HE WAS ABANDONED BY THE U.S. IN A SITUATION EXACTLY LIKE THE ONE WHICH PRESIDENT THIEU SUFFERS FROM TODAY." LA MANANA CONTINUED: "THE VIET NAM WAR WAS NOTHING MORE THAN ANOTHER STEP IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A GIGANTIC IMPERIALIST PLAN (OF COMMUNIST DOMINATION) ... THE U.S. DECISION TO OPPOSE THE CONQUEST OF VIET NAM AND THE NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES WAS INSPIRED BY ITS ASSUMPTION OF ITS DUTIES AS THE LEADER OF THE DEMOCRATIC WORLD." THE ENORMOUS AMERICAN EFFORT WAS WEAKENED BY "CHARACTERISTIC ADMINSTRATIVE ERRORS" AND SABOTAGED BY RADICALS, PACIFISTS AND HIPPIES UNDER COMMUNIST DIRECTION. "A CURRENT OF PUBLIC OPINION WAS CREATED WHICH BEGAN TO PROCLAIM PLAINLY THAT THE NEW VIRTUES OF THE DEMOCRACY OF WASHINGTON AND JEFFERSON WERE TO BETRAY ALLIES TO SURRENDER WITHOUT FIGHTING, TO RELISH DEFEAT, AND TO ADMIT TO A FALSE WEAKNESS." LA MANANA THEN DISCUSSED THE "ABANDONMENT" OF VIET NAM WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE ROLE OF CONGRESS. "THE SAME CONGRESS THAT DECREED THE

FALL OF VIET NAM AND DICTATED THE TRADE ACT THAT IS CAUSING SERIOUS DAMAGE TO LATIN AMERICA IS PROMOTING THE RENEWAL OF RELATIONS WITH CUBA.- LA MANANA SPECIFICALLY CRITICIZED SENATOR KENNEDY AND SECRETARY KISSINGER FOR THE CHANGE IN ATTITUDE TOWARD CUBA, AND THEN DECIDED THAT THE ONLY EXPLANATION FOR THESE EVENTS WAS THAT THE U.S. AND THE U.S.S.R. HAD DECIDED "TO PUT THEIR RESPECTIVE HEGEMONIES IN ORDER" BY EXCHANGING CUBA AND VIET NAM. "THIS UTTERLY USELESS STOP IN THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE U.S. IS NOT THE FIRST, NOR, LAMENTABLY, WILL IT BE THE LAST. THE WORLD HAS HAD MORE THAN ENOUGH EXPERIENCE OF THIS, AS HAS LATIN AMERICA, WHICH HAS ALWAYS GIVEN MORE THAN IT HAS RECEIVED IN ITS DEALINGS WITH THE U.S. AND HAS INGENUOUSLY HOPED FOR THE FULFILLMENT OF SCINTILLATING DECLARATIONS AND COPIOUS PROMISES." LA MANANA CONCLUDED THAT LATIN AMERICA CAN ONLY SURVIVE IF IT LEARNS TO RELY ON ITSELF "WITHOUT SUBMITTING ITSELF TO FOREIGN INTERESTS OR DIRECTIVES".

12. THE TRADITIONALLY CONSERVATIVE, PRO-GOVERNMENT EL PAIS'S LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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APRIL 12 EDITORIAL (WHILE LESS EXTREME THAN THE ULTRA-CONSERVATIVELY DOCTRINAIRE AND OFTEN ANTI-AMERICAN LA MANANA) WORRIED ABOUT THE THREAT TO WESTERN THOUGHT AND THE WESTERN WAY OF LIFE. THE SPECIFIC EVENTS THAT CONCERNED EL PAIS ARE THE MILITARY ADVANCES OF THE COMMUNISTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA AND THE "POLITICAL MUTILATION" IN PORTUGAL "BUT TOGETHER WITH THESE, AGGRAVATING THEM AND ADDING TO OUR ANXIETY ARE THE DIPLOMATIC VACILLATIONS OF THE U.S.," THE CONTRADICTIONS OF THE WESTERN EUROPEAN DEMOCRACIES, THE THIRD WORLD'S INCREASING TENDENCY TO DIRECT ITS INVECTIVE SOLELY TOWARD THE WESTERN WORLD, LATIN AMERICA'S DISAGREEMENTS WITH THE U.S., AND OPEC'S ACTIONS. ACCORDING TO EL PAIS, A MORTAL CONFRONTATION IS TAKING PLACE, "AND WE ARE FULLY ALIGNED WITH THOSE WHO PRACTICE AND ASPIRE TO PRESERVE WESTERN FORMS OF LIFE. AND WHEN, AS IS OCCURRING NOW, WE PERCEIVE THE DETERIORATION OF WESTERN DEFENSIVE SYSTEMS, IT IS OUR CONCERN TO ENCOURAGE A REACTION AND TO PARTICIPATE IN IT." EL PAIS HOPES FOR A RETURN TO STRONG LEADERSHIP, "NOT THE LEADERSHIP OF TODAY, WHICH RESTS ON POLITICAL AND ELECTORAL CONCERNS, AS HAS OCCURRED IN THE U.S. SINCE CONGRESS TOOK CONTROL OF FOREIGN POLICY."

13. EL PAIS'S APRIL 13 EDITORIAL, ENTITLED "APPEASEMENT AND PIMPING IN THE WEST" COMMENTED THAT THE FREE WORLD'S APPEASEMENT AND FAILURE TO DEFEND ITSELF BEFORE COMMUNIST AGGRESSION, PENETRATION AND CONQUEST IS NO LONGER SIMPLY CAUSE FOR ALARM, BUT FOR TERRIBLE ANXIETY. THE WORST PART OF THIS, ACCORDING TO EL PAIS, IS THAT THE POLITICAL

AND MORAL RESERVES OF THE WEST ARE BEING UNDERMINED
"SHAMEFULLY AND IN PERMANENT FORM" NOT ONLY BY INFILTRA-
TION BUT BY LACK OF FAITH AND UNDERSTANDING AND BY THE
ABSURD CONVICTION THAT IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES CAN BE
SETTLED AMICABLY.
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